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HISTORY

OF

WHEATLAND, Iowa

by

A. W. Gault

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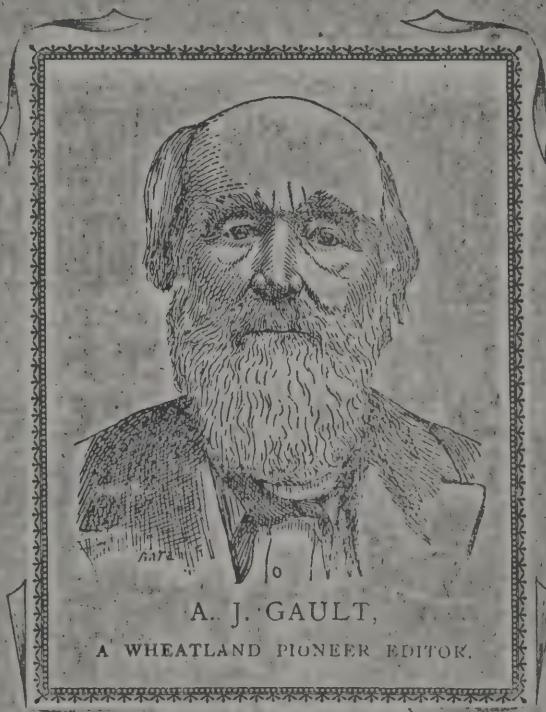
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A. J. GAULT,  
A WHEATLAND PIONEER EDITOR.



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## INDEX.

<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Early History</b> .....	1
First Settlers.....	2
First Buildings.....	3
<b>Early Business Men</b> .....	4
<b>Newspapers</b> .....	5
The First Paper.....	6
An Instance.....	6
Later Papers.....	7
<b>Religion</b> .....	8
<b>Incorporated</b> .....	8
<b>Fires</b> .....	9
Fire of July 4th, 1874.....	9
First Fire Protection.....	11
Fire of March 5th, 1892.....	11
Fire of July 30th, 1892.....	11
Fire of February 5th, 1893.....	12
Other Fires.....	12
Fire Protection at Last.....	12
<b>War Record</b> .....	12
Officers and Privates.....	13
<b>Educational</b> .....	14
<b>Secret Societies</b> .....	15
<b>Early Justice</b> .....	16
First Civil Suit.....	16
First Criminal Case.....	16
<b>Notes</b> .....	17
<b>Present Business Men</b> .....	18
<b>Reminiscences</b> .....	18
The Bridge Builders.....	19
Wapsie Rangers.....	21
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	23



# HISTORY OF WHEATLAND.

By A. W. GAULT.

## INTRODUCTION.

Every American citizen should be familiar with the history of his country and every citizen of Wheatland should familiarize himself with the history of the town. It is for this reason that we have compiled the following brief history of the town of Wheatland, that the younger generation may become better acquainted with its early history. The task has not been an easy one. There are but few records of the events of early days in existence and we have been obliged to depend mainly upon the good memory of the few early settlers that are still living. This, with other documents which we have had access to, has enabled us to write this crude, but nevertheless interesting history.

It is possible that the following article contains a few errors. It could hardly be otherwise when one has only a few records to refer to. But if there are errors they are of minor importance and will not materially affect the work. Had a complete file of Wheatland's newspapers been

preserved, or, better still, had the early residents taken pains to keep a record of the most important events in the town's history, the task of compiling the same would not have been so difficult. Our thanks are especially due to Dr. T. D. Gamble for services rendered.

As a matter of convenience we have divided this article into the following sections: Early History, Early Business Men, Newspapers, Religion, Incorporated, Fires, War Record, Educational, Secret Societies, Present Business Men, Early Justice, Reminiscences and Conclusion. The article will be given space in the SPECULATOR from week to week until its completion. It would be well for the younger people of Wheatland to preserve the papers in which this history is published.

## EARLY HISTORY.

Long years ago the land where Wheatland now stands was the abode of the noble red man. Nothing save the bellow of the buffalo and the howl of the wolf disturbed him in his soli-



## HISTORY OF WHEATLAND.

tude. The pale face did not bother him; game was plenty; fish were abundant and life was easy for him. Just so it was in other portions of Iowa and her sister states. But at last there came a change. White people were constantly arriving from Europe and the tendency was then—as it always has been since the creation of man—to move westward. This crowded the Indian farther toward the setting sun and the white man took his place. Where then was heard the bellow of the buffalo, the howl of the wolf and unearthly shriek of the panther, the shriek of the locomotive now breaks upon the still night air, while in the neighboring farm yards can be heard the lowing of the kine and low whinny of the domestic horse.

It is not our purpose in this article to give a history of anything other than that of Wheatland from the time the land where it now stands was first settled by white men. While there are many interesting events that have a remote bearing on the history of the town, we have not the space to devote to publish them.

### FIRST SETTLERS.

In the early fifties "Chubb," Erastus and William Holmes

came to this neighborhood and entered quite a good deal of land; part of it was that on which the town of Wheatland now stands. Old settlers tell us that a small log cabin was built at this time near where Peter Smith's farm house now stands and that a part of the land on that farm was broken by the plow. The Holmes did not reside here, however.

Away back in April 1803, in Delaware county, N. Y., the founder of the town of Wheatland—John L. Bennett—was born. For about twenty-five years Mr. Bennett was engaged in the lumbering business on the Delaware river. He moved to Rock county, Wis., in the spring of 1846. In 1855 he purchased from the Holmes the land on which the town of Wheatland now stands. He built his house in 1856 and moved his family here in 1857. A railroad, now the Chicago & North Western, was extended west to Wheatland in 1858 and in that year Mr. Bennett platted the town. He named the new village Wheatland after the residence of Buchanan for the reason that he was a great admirer of that gentleman.

With the advent of the railroad the town began to grow and



thrive and in a few years was a great place for business. A list of some of the early business men of Wheatland will be found in a succeeding chapter. In 1870 the Davenport & St. Paul—now the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad was opened through Wheatland and continued on north. The citizens subscribed a good deal of money to get this road, but business was not much improved by reason of its coming. The population of the town in former years was much larger than it is now and business was much better.

A few wild deer were still to be seen by the early settlers and stumps of trees remained to show where the industrious beaver had cut his wood with which to make his dam. In fact a beaver dam was at that time in existence in a slough near the Wapsie river. Game, such as duck, geese, brant, quail, partridge, squirrel and the like was very plentiful and fish were abundant.

Wheatland is situated in Spring Rock township on the south-east quarter of Sec. 9, and the south west quarter of Sec. 10, in township 81 north, Range 1.

Mr. Bennett lived to a ripe old age and remained a resident of

Wheatland until Nov. 4, 1888, when he died, beloved and respected by all. He was married to Eleanor Wakeman, who did not long survive him, in July 1828. This union was blessed with three children: Edwin W., now a resident of the state of Wyoming, Almedia, who resides in Davenport and one child who died in infancy.

#### FIRST BUILDINGS.

The first building erected in Wheatland was a frame house built by J. L. Bennett. It originally stood in the middle of the street and was used for sometime as a farm house. When the town was laid out the building was moved to its present location just back of Herman Grill's new store building. This building is in a very good condition for one so old. It was occupied by Mr. Bennett and family up to the time of his death. It is to be hoped that this pioneer residence will long remain a witness as it were, to the interesting and stirring events that happened in this vicinity when Wheatland was in its infancy.

The first hotel erected in Wheatland used to stand on the corner now occupied by A. Lohman's store. The first landlords were Case & Munson. It was afterwards enlarged and improved



and became known as the Tucker House. In this hotel was a large hall where in the early days of Wheatland were held dances and entertainments of various kinds. The music for these festivities was usually furnished by Parks & Curtis, Joe Organ, Tom Williams and E. Cowden. This hotel continued to do business until the winter of 1882, when it was destroyed by fire.

The next buildings to be erected were a residence and blacksmith shop by W. J. Mecorney; a residence—now the John Walraven property—by J. D. Fegan and a residence by M. L. Rogers, which is now owned by J. A. Frost. Previous to these, the residence on Jefferson street occupied by John Schadt, was built by Dennis Whitney.

### EARLY BUSINESS MEN.

The pioneer merchant of the town was M. L. Rogers, who commenced business in a small shanty where he sold clothing and groceries to the hands who were building the railroad. He afterwards enlarged his business and enjoyed a good trade. A post office was established here in 1858 and M. L. Rogers was the first

postmaster. He occupied that position until 1861, when he was succeeded by S. H. Rogers. D. Beckman is the present incumbent.

T. D. Gamble was the first physician to locate in Wheatland. He came here from Sabula, Jackson county in 1858. There was at about the time of his arrival here a man by the name of Patterson who was very ill. As soon as the news was spread through town that there was a physician in the village a messenger was dispatched at once for Dr. Gamble. He responded to the call, but when he reached the bedside of his patient he found him already in the throes of death and could do nothing to relieve him. This was the doctor's first case in Wheatland. In these days he opened a drug store in which business he still continues. His son, James, now assists him.

In 1859 Charles Churchill came to Wheatland from DeKalb, Ill., and engaged in the wagon making business.

In 1862 J. A. Frost came to Wheatland and engaged in the dental and picture business. To this he added the drug business in 1867 and continued it until 1870. He is at present station agent for



the C. M. & St. P. railroad, having held the position continuously since 1872.

Lawrence O'Connor came to the new village in 1858 and engaged in the grain business. He previously resided on a farm just south of Wheatland.

Jesse Stine hung out his shingle as attorney at law in 1862. The first lot sold in Wheatland was purchased by him. This was on Railroad street south of Jefferson, where he erected an office. In after years he changed his location and erected the building which he uses for an office at present.

Another old resident of Wheatland is J. S. Stowers, who came here in 1861 and devoted his time principally to teaching school. He was also an attorney at law, having been admitted to the bar in Indiana in 1843. In 1844 he came to Davenport and was admitted to the bar there. In 1845 he was appointed county judge to fill a vacancy. He was the second person to hold that office. He is still a resident of Wheatland and at present conducts a small grocery store on Jefferson street.

John Walraven, another pioneer and still a resident of Wheatland, came here in 1862 and engaged in the agricultural implement busi-

ness, which he conducted for several years.

Wm. Magden was the first attorney to practice law at Wheatland. He located here in 1861.

S. L. Banks was the first weighmaster employed by the town. A. M. Hall now occupies that position.

Bob McLaughlin was the first tinner to locate in the town.

Dr. D. S. Cook, at present one of Wheatland's able physicians, passed through here long before Wheatland was thought of, in 1851, and located in Jackson county. He did not locate in Wheatland in 1866.

Other pioneer business men were: George D. Bowling, harness maker; Jake O'Toole, saloon keeper; Charles Fogg, grocery; Jim Hicks, hardware; Larkin Rickard, store; T. P. Farrington and J. C. Grouell, carpenters; J. D. Fegan, grain buyer; R. J. Jencks, ferryman.

In years gone by Wheatland had thirteen saloons at one time.

## NEWSPAPERS.

Newspapers in Wheatland have never been much of a success from a financial point of view. There have been, since Wheat-



land first saw the light of day, no less than eight papers started here. All these, except the *SPECTATOR* and *Gazette*, flourished for a few years and then, for numerous reasons, ceased to exist.

#### THE FIRST PAPER.

In the year 1860 a stock company was formed, a printing outfit purchased and the *Wheatland Times*, Wheatland's first paper, was launched on the troubled sea of journalism with O. D. Crane as editor and publisher. Mr. Crane managed the publication of the *Times* for a few weeks and then tired of his job and E. J. Farnham took charge of the plant and published the paper for a year or so.

At the close of Mr. Farnham's career as editor, the company talked of boxing up the outfit and shipping it to some other point. A. J. Gault heard of this intended move and, though he knew nothing about the mechanical department of a newspaper, he decided if he could purchase the office he would do so and continue the publication of the paper in Wheatland. He accordingly informed the company of his intentions and the office was forthwith sold to him. He took possession at once, but changed the name of the paper from the *Times* to the *Citizen*.

*ton County Advocate.* With the exception of a few months, Mr. Gault published the paper until 1865. Then it was sold to W. M. Magden, who managed the office for a few weeks and then disposed of his interests to Charles Baker who shortly moved the outfit to Wilton Junction. Then for a few years Wheatland was without a newspaper.

#### AN INSTANCE.

This first newspaper venture was quite up hill work for Mr. Gault. While he soon learned how to set type, he still did not become proficient enough but what he needed help to get out his paper. Good printers were hard to find in those days and what few there were out of a job had one failing, that of getting drunk and remaining so for days at a time. At these times Mr. Gault was obliged to work early and late in order to get his paper out on time. One night, at a late hour, while he was making up his forms, his assistant came into the office as drunk as he could possibly be and still be able to navigate. He at once wanted to "institute the shebang" and in fact did attempt, in his drunken condition, to make up the paper. But he became so boistrous and Mr.



Gault, fearing he might pi the forms, was finally obliged to forcibly eject the gentleman from the office. Similiar occurrences were quite frequent in the days of pioneer journalism in Wheatland.

#### LATER PAPERS.

Early in the seventies Dr. Carrothers started the publication of another paper called the *Wheatland News*. Mr. Carrothers successfully conducted this paper until his death which occurred in the winter of 1875-76. F. L. Dennis then purchased the outfit and continued the publication of the *News* until the summer of 1878, when he suspended business and moved the material to the western part of the state.

Sometime about this date W. H. Baylis published a small weekly sheet called the *Enterprise*.

In 1878 H. C. Ford moved a printing office here from Lost Nation and issued the next paper, called the *Union*. This paper, like its predecessors, was short lived and publication was discontinued in a few years.

A stock company was formed and an outfit was purchased at Davenport and in May 1881 the first number of the *SPECTATOR* was issued with A. J. Gault as editor. Mr. Gault managed the of-

fice until May 1883 when, owing to ill health, the outfit was leased to D. R. Markham, who edited and published the paper until May 1888, when A. J. Gault again assumed control and is still editor of the sheet.

In 1881 or 1882 H. L. Barter published a small paper here which was called the *Free Press*. He was at that time working in the *SPECTATOR* office and utilized what spare time he had in getting his publication ready for the press. He used the same press used by Mr. Baylis in the publication of the *Enterprise*.

In the spring of 1888, when Mr. Markham found that the *SPECTATOR* plant had been leased to Mr. Gault, he, in company with Fred Dieckman—who was then local editor of the *SPECTATOR*—purchased a new outfit in Chicago, moved it to Wheatland and in May 1888, the first number of the *Wheatland Gazette* was printed. In a few months Mr. Dieckmann severed his connection with the paper and F. W. Buxton took his place. After a few years Mr. Buxton purchased Mr. Markham's share of the office and is at present editor and proprietor of the paper.

The *SPECTATOR* enjoys the dis-



tinction of being the longest lived paper ever published in Wheatland and also has at its head one of the pioneer editors of the country.

### RELIGION.

Wheatland now has two church edifices—the Presbyterian and German Reformed. It had at one time years ago, as many as three. The present pastor of the St. Paul's German Reformed church is Rev. C. G. Zipf. The Presbyterian denomination has no pastor at the present time, but Rev. Wolcott, a Methodist minister, occupies the pulpit.

The German and Presbyterian churches were both built about the same time, in 1858 or '59. There are so many contradictions in regard to these dates that it is hard to determine exactly, but there is at most not more than a year's difference. The old German church used to stand on the corner where the parsonage is now located. It was used as a house of worship for several years and becoming too small a new building was erected some sixteen years ago and the old building was sold to Dr. Gamble who uses

it for a stable. Rev. Oswald was the first pastor of this church.

The Presbyterian church still remains and is used as a house of worship. Sunday school is held every Sunday and the Y. P. S. C. E. society holds its sessions in this building. We have been unable to learn who was the first Presbyterian minister.

In 1869 the Disciples organized a church here. The building used by them as a house of worship was located just north of the German church and is now occupied as a residence by D. Beckman. This organization flourished for several years, but finally so many of the members moved away that the meetings were discontinued, no services being held for several years.

The Methodists at one time also had an organization here, but never erected a church building.

### INCORPORATED.

Wheatland was incorporated July 13, 1869 and the first town election was held July 29th of the same year. E. Woods was the first mayor. Mr. Woods was born in Belmont county, Ohio, June 6, 1811. He came to Wheatland in 1866 and engaged in the lumber



business, forming a co-partnership with A. M. Hall in 1867. He was mayor of the town of Wheatland '69-'71 and again in 1873. He passed away several years ago and his residence is now the property of Geo. Riedesel.

A. M. Hall was the first recorder and holds that office at the present time. He was born in Indiana county, Penn., March 8, 1832. He came to Wheatland in 1864 and continued in the photograph business until 1866, when he engaged in the lumber business. He is at present justice of the peace and weighmaster.

Wheatland's mayors have been as follows: E. Woods, '69-'71; C. H. Sanford, '72; E. Woods, '73; T. D. Gamble, '74-'78; O. J. Thornton, '79-'93; C. F. Jeppe, '90-'94. T. D. Gamble is the present incumbent.

T. D. Gamble, T. P. Farrington, Henry Bullmer, John Schmidt and David Mohr were the first members of the city council. The present incumbents are August Engel, J. G. Sherer, N. Nissen, J. E. Klahn, E. E. Corbett and Peter Banderob.

The first treasurer of the town was E. Carter. The present incumbent is Hans Kohberg.

Wheatland's pioneer marshal

was James F. Scott. Herman Martens occupies that position at present.

In 1876 a two-story brick building was erected to be used as a city hall. The building still remains. The second story is used as a council chamber and the ground floor is the headquarters of the Wheatland Volunteer Fire Company.

## FIREs.

Wheatland has had more than its share of fires. Several times has the business portion of the town been burned, but after each fire has been rebuilt. The first fire of which we have any record occurred December 12, 1872. At that fire several buildings were destroyed.

### THE FIRE OF JULY 4TH, 1874.

But the great 4th of July fire, the fire that stood to Wheatland as the great fire caused by O'Leary's cow did to Chicago, occurred July 4th, 1874. The city on that day was preparing to celebrate the birthday of American Independence and a genuine old time Fourth of July program had been prepared for the occasion. People were gathering to have a good time, but alas, the day of



joy was soon to be turned into a day of sorrow. Just as the procession was moving at about 10 o'clock in the forenoon, the dreadful cry of fire was heard and smoke was seen issuing from a building in the business portion of the town. Wheatland at that time had no fire protection and the fire was soon beyond all human control. All that the spectators could do was to save what few goods they could. In speaking of the fire, the *Wheatland News*, which issued a small sheet July 9th 1874, said:

"This fire from the time that the first building was wrapt in flames till the whole business portion of the east side of Railroad street was a mass of smouldering ruins, was only about two hours. The fire was the most rapid in its progress of any we have ever witnessed. The flames lashed into fury by the breeze it seemed to invite, raged and laughed at the puny efforts made to check them, and stayed themselves only when there was nothing else within reach to burn."

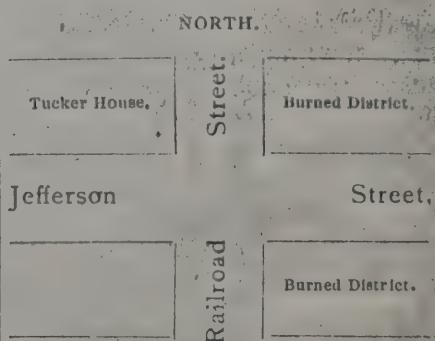
At this time the *News* also published a list of the buildings burned, together with the amount of loss. It was as follows:

T. D. Gamble, druggist.....	\$ 6,500
S. M. Batterson, dry goods.....	400
A. Smith, hardware store.....	2,000
L. Snyder, groceries and dry goods.....	8,500
A. Dresden, groceries and household goods, ..	2,500

O. J. Thornton, harness shop.....	600
Mecorney & Co., wagon and carriage shop.....	3,500
Cook & Curtis, druggists .....	2,000
Miss M. Purcell, millinery and building.....	1,000
S. L. Banks, building.....	2,500
S. Y. Sansom, goods.....	1,500
D. W. Carothers, goods.....	150
Carothers & Sansom, printing office.....	200
Henry & Baker, meat market.....	75
H. F. Griffin.....	200
L. Munson.....	1,000
M. McKall.....	500
W. H. Baylis.....	400
D. S. Cook, library and house.....	500
D. Brown, wagon.....	100
A. Lohman, goods damaged.....	75
A. Van DeBogart.....	80

J. W. Thompson was completely burned out. Several sheds, barns, etc., were also destroyed. The fire was caused by the careless use of fire-crackers. It was a hard blow for Wheatland, but an appeal for aid was circulated which was quickly responded to by neighboring towns and a portion of the business center was soon rebuilt.

Following is a diagram of the burned district as it appeared in this issue of the *News*:





## FIRST FIRE PROTECTION.

Sometime in the seventies, a few years after this fire, a hook and ladder company was organized and a cart and ladders manufactured. This was not of very much service, however. The cart was a large cumbrous affair and the legs were so long that one could hardly run with it on account of the legs striking the ground. And again, the ladders could not be found when wanted. It was a poor excuse for fire protection.

The next fire was that of the Tucker house, which was destroyed in the winter of 1882.

## FIRE OF MARCH 6TH, 1892.

For several years after the Tucker House fire Wheatland was free from conflagrations.

While there were at various times buildings burned, the town escaped disastrous fires until 2 o'clock on the morning of March 6, 1892, when fire was discovered in the building where W. H. Pieper had his store, on the corner now occupied by the Grill building. At this fire the following business men met with losses: W. H. Pieper, store; S. Akerly, barber; J. Keller, blacksmith shop; N. Nissen, boot and shoe-store; Mrs. Adam, restaurant—building, the

property of P. Kroeger. James Loptien's saloon building was torn down in order to prevent the flames from doing further damage.

## FIRE OF JULY 30TH, 1892.

The next fire to visit Wheatland occurred at about 11 o'clock p. m., July 30th of the same year. The fire was first discovered in the Lohman building. The flames made quick headway and in a few hours the entire brick block was ablaze. This was the greatest fire in the history of Wheatland since the fire of 1874, while not so much ground was burned over, the buildings destroyed were of brick; and more than this, a human life was lost in the flames. John Schneider and his wife and child resided in the rooms over A. Lohmann's store. Mr. Schneider and the child escaped from the burning building, but Mrs. Schneider was overcome by the smoke or gas and was unable to save herself and perished. Following is a list of the firms burned out, together with a list of the losses as published at that time:

A. Little, building and goods.....	\$28,000
J. G. Sherer do	3,500
R. Kohberg do	4,500
W. F. Diebner, goods.....	1,500
H. Witt, goods.....	750
P. Kroeger, building and goods.....	loss not given

Wheatland still had no fire de-



partment, but the Lowden and DeWitt companies did very excellent work toward staying the spread of the flames. Most of the buildings and goods burned were insured, but we can not say how much of this insurance money was paid.

#### FIRE OF FEB. 5TH, 1893.

On February 5th, 1893 Wheatland was again visited by the fire fiend. This time the whole block south of A. Lohman's store, with the exception of the Wayne Hotel was burned. Following is the list of buildings destroyed by the fire and the losses:

City Hotel, building and furniture.....	\$1,700
J. Stine, building, occupied by Gunderman, /	1,200
Wm. Endorf, residence and rented buildings.	2,000
Ferdinand Lahan, renter.....	800
Peter Thede .. .. .. ..	1,000
John Adami.....	loss unknown

The Wayne Hotel was slightly damaged. Several of the buildings were insured—amount unknown to us.

These last three fires are supposed to have been the work of an incendiary.

#### OTHER FIRES.

Other buildings burned in Wheatland at various times, we give as follows: Scott's residence, Lienau's residence, owned by J. C. Grouell, Ficke's large barn, C. & N.W. depot, C. M. & St. P. warehouse and Grill's barn.

#### FIRE PROTECTION AT LAST.

For several years some of the citizens had endeavored to have a fire company organized and a system of waterworks put in, but nothing was done in the matter until the spring of 1892. In April of that year the present fire company was organized and the next fall work was commenced on the water works. M. H. Curtis is chief of the department. This company had an opportunity to test its efficiency one night in June of the present year. The building occupied as a restaurant by Wm. Loptien was discovered to be on fire. The fire laddies were soon at the scene of action and worked heroically, extinguishing the flames before they gained much headway. Were it not for the fire department it is safe to say that Wheatland's history would have had another conflagration added to its already too large a list.

#### WAR RECORD.

Clinton county has a war record second to none in the state and Wheatland and the surrounding townships also furnished a company of soldiers, known as Co. I of the 26th Infantry. Husbands left their wives and children, sons



departed from their homes to join the ranks to save their country from the southern foe. They were brave and noble men; leaving their homes and loved ones and all that was dear to them for the sake of country. Patriotism filled every heart and the recruits came from every walk of life. The farmer left his plow; the mechanic, his workshop; the preacher, his pulpit; the judge, the bench; all desirous of the one thing: to put down the rebellion that this country might be free.

Company I was mustered into service September 30th, 1862. It was raised from Wheatland, and townships of Spring Rock, Berlin and Liberty. A few, of the men came from the border of Cedar county. Its officers were: Captain, Edwin A. Wemple, of Wheatland; First Lieutenant, John L. Steele, of near Massillon; and Second Lieutenant, Edwin W. Bennett, of Wheatland. The following is a roster of the company:

## CAPTAINS.

Edwin A. Wemple, commissioned September 30, 1862. Resigned June 4, 1863.

John L. Steele, commissioned 1st Lieutenant Sept. 30, 1862; promoted Captain June 15, 1863.

Wounded at Oak Ridge and died there.

Wm. Nickel, enlisted as corporal August 12, 1862; prompted 2nd Lieutenant June 5, 1863; wounded at Oak Ridge; promoted Captain Nov. 28, 1863.

## LIEUTENANTS.

First Lieutenant, Robert Cummings, enlisted as corporal Aug. 12, 1862; promoted 1st Lieutenant, Nov. 28, 1863.

Second Lieutenant, Edwin W. Bennett, commissioned Sept. 30, 1862; resigned Feb. 26, 1863.

## SERGEANTS.

Wm M Magden	Jos D Fegan
F B Bissell	Hiram Hoskins
John Dolan	L W Smith

J D McOllough

## CORPORALS.

C'C Churchill	John B Fridley
Geo E Wood	Wm H Alban
Anthony Cain	R A Page
L C Bentley	C W Hatch
Jos J Eldridge	Geo Stapleton

N S Russell

## MUSICIANS.

Samuel Haskell	Wm H Nash
----------------	-----------

## WAGONER.

Eli Ballard

## PRIVATE.

Platt Armstrong	Levi Benedict
L C Bentley	Chas Bennett
Cornelius Beddon	F R Beddon
J R Blanchard	M A Blanchard



## HISTORY OF WHEATLAND.

Wm Boyer	John E Brown
N C Blocker	M Carraher
A P Cook	Wm Cummings
D G Curtis	Jas Disney
Pat Dougherty	Geo Enright
O E Finch	L T Finch
Thomas French	H Ferguson
F H Gardner	John C Gates
G A Gurney	F A Gurney
J J Grouell	Isaac Gurver
John Guerson	C Granson
John Guffy	Isaac Guffy
Jas Gunigle	Martin Havens
Chas Hague	Jos Hemming
Henry Howe	P T Hutcheson
Geo E Jenkins	I H Johnson
August Kook	John H Lambert
J W McOllough	John McCuddin
John P Merrill	E D Morton
John Murray	Edw O'Connor
T H Oliver,	Robert Osburn
J Pasornick	John Phillips
Jos Powelker	Silas Priest
Jas M Riley	Geo G Rundall
L Rundall	N F Russell
E Sherman	C W Smith
Daniel Steed	Jos Stumpt
Loring Stearns	M Stapleton
John Staffenheal	Leslie True
Wesley True	Chas K Wilder

S W Wellington.

The Twenty-sixth Iowa Regiment, of which this company was a part, was mustered out of the service at Washington, D. C. June 6, 1865. Many of the mem-

bers of company I never lived to see their loved ones again. The company's record is a good one and the people of Wheatland and vicinity will always point with pride to the record of the men who composed the company that was sent from this neighborhood.

### EDUCATIONAL.

The first school ever held in Wheatland was in a frame building now occupied as a residence by J. E. Klahn. The school records of those times are very vague, and do not throw much light upon the educational matters in Wheatland prior to 1869. In 1866 or 1867 it being found that this frame building was not large enough to accommodate the increasing attendance, the erection of a new building was decided upon, and accordingly the present brick school building containing four rooms, was built. In June 1867 the ground, then belonging to S. H. Ewalt, was accepted by the board which then consisted of the following gentlemen: J. Stine, Michael Barrett, S. Templeton, L. Derr and John Walraven. Jerome Dutton was secretary of the board at that time. The contract of building



## HISTORY OF WHEATLAND.

the new school house was let to W. H. Weeks, of Cedar Rapids, for \$6,950.

While there is occasionally a teacher's record to be found prior to 1869, the first complete record of the four teachers that we have been enabled to obtain were the following, who taught the Wheatland Public School in 1869: Miss Lucy Curtis, Miss Margaret Ross, F. A. Maxwell and Mrs. H. Henderson. The present teachers are: Prof. J. J. Moser, Miss Sarah Rettig, Miss Maud Walraven and Miss Mae Conro.

The present board of directors is as follows: President, M. H. Curtis; Secretary, H. C. Ficke; Directors, J. W. Hover, J. F. Gundermann, H. Horstmann, Frank Witte and J. Wohlenburg.

Our school facilities are second to no town of the size of Wheatland in the state, and our teachers are among the best.

There was a small college here at one time, located in the second story of J. E. Klahn's store building, but it was short lived. It was under the management of Prof. Porter.

**SECRET SOCIETIES.**

Wheatland is well supplied with fraternal organizations. The

following orders being represented: Masonic, the A. O. U. W., the M. W. of A. and the Knights of Pythias. These lodges all enjoy a good membership.

Zeredatha Lodge, No. 184, A. F. & A. M. is the oldest order in the town. It was organized in 1865 and is, as it always has been, in a prosperous condition. Stated communications Monday on or before full moon. M. H. Curtis, W. M.; H. C. Ficke, Secretary.

Wheatland Lodge, A. O. U. W., of Iowa, No. 123, was organized in 1877. It has a strong membership and is the second oldest order in the town. Regular meetings the 4th and 28th of each month. T. D. Gamble, W. M., J. F. Gunderman, Recorder.

A. O. U. W., Loyal Lodge, No. 123, meets every Monday evening. It also has a fair membership. C. Hoffmeister, W. M., Fr. Horstman, Recorder.

The Modern Woodmen of America also has a strong order here. The Wheatland Camp is known as Camp No 14. Meetings are held the first and third Saturday evening of each month. Charles Mordhorst, V. C., D. Beckman, Clerk.

The youngest existing order in Wheatland is Wapsipinnicon



Lodge, Knights of Pythias, No. 265, organized in 1890. Although the youngest order, it is not far behind the other societies in point of membership. Regular meetings the second and fourth Saturday evenings in each month. M. H. Curtis, C. C., W. F. Walraven, K. of R. & S.

Several Good Templar Lodges have been organized here in times past, but their existence was short.

An A. P. A. Lodge was organized here in the early nineties.

## EARLY JUSTICE.

### FIRST CIVIL SUIT.

The first civil suit, of which we have any record, to occur in Wheatland was tried in Justice J. D. Fegan's court January 14th 1859. The title of this case was Tiffing & Co., vs. A. L. Rickard. The plaintiff sued the defendant to secure the payment of a note for \$21.50, given by Rickard to Tiffing & Co., Nov. 23, 1858 and due one day after date. The notice of suit was served by constable John O'Connor. Defendant confessed judgment for the amount of claim, \$21.50 and 20 cents interest, costs of the suit as follows: Justice fees, \$1.00; con-

stable fees \$45.

### FIRST CRIMINAL CASE.

The first criminal case which appears on the record was tried in Justice Fegan's court May 12, 1859. H. Vanosdale filed information against Michael Casey, Peter Brogan, James Cotter and Michael Creedon, charging them with assaulting one T. P. Farrington, an officer of the county, and gathering together in unlawful assembly. They plead not guilty and the following named gentlemen were subpoenaed as witnesses: Robert McLaughlin H. Vanosdale, A. J. Gault, E. W. Bennett, Peter Mucklow and M. C. Hale. Michael Casey and Michael Creedon were fined \$10. each with lawful interest thereon and costs of suit. They appeared before the justice May 13th and paid part of their fine—\$4.00 each—and were not committed to jail, but were discharged on the condition that they pay the balance of the fine at some other day. Peter Brogan and James Cotter were discharged.

The assault was brought about in this wise. In those days times were pretty lively in Wheatland and fights and offenses against the public peace were numerous. T. P. Farrington, who was then con-



stable, was attempting to arrest an offender when the gang set upon him, assaulting him with whatever they could lay their hands on. The crowd became too much for him and the lovers of law and order who stood looking on were compelled to take a hand in the matter and release Thomas from his predicament. A grand free fight was the result.

It is related that in the early days of Wheatland a case was on trial and the members of the jury were frequently treated to whisky, which was passed around in a pitcher while the court was in session. As a result, two of the jurymen became very drunk and a verdict could not be reached and the jury was discharged.

#### NOTES.

The first burial ground in Wheatland was located on the lot now owned by Mrs. J. C. Grouell, just east of Frank Witte's residence. There are at present three cemeteries here: the American, German and that of the German Reformed church.

The early settlers of this township were George, Martin, Peter and Eli Goddard, L. Snyder, R. H. Randall, J. H. Snyder, J. Cum-

mings, Geo. W. Parker, Abner Davidson, Benjamin Davidson, Ira Cortright, Anthony Cortright, Lawrence O'Connor.

The following residents of Wheatland have held at various times the position of county supervisor; S. H. Rogers, 1861; James A. Hicks, 1862; C. E. Lefingwell, 1863; S. H. Templeton, 1864-65; N. M. Everhart, 1866-67; Jesse Stine, 1868-69; George Goddard, 1870; Jesse Stine, 1871-72; Arthur Lillie, 1876, who, on account of some mistake in the ballots, resigned in favor of his brother B. A. Lillie whom it was intended to elect.

Stock brought good prices here in the early sixties. In January 1864 one man marketed 21 hogs at this station for which he obtained \$700. But it must be remembered that these were war times when everything brought good prices. During the war times the North-Western depot at this place was filled with dressed pork. In fact all the available space was taken up in this manner so that no other freight could be stored in the depot. The reason for so much dressed pork being held there was owing to the fact that the govern-



ment had taken possession of all or nearly all of the rolling stock and cars could not be obtained to move the freight.

The prairie grass on Walraven's pasture in the early days of Wheatland was so tall and thick that hunters frequently got lost in crossing the prairie. Much of the land is now being broken by the plow and will make excellent farm land.

One of the oldest manufactoryes in Wheatland is the Wheatland Brick and Tile Works. This brick yard was established in 1858 or '59 by John Smith who did his work by hand. The plant is now operated by F. Beenk who has put in the latest improved machinery.

### PRESENT BUSINESS MEN.

The present business men of Wheatland are as follows: A. Lohman, general store; E. Tay Tinker, dentist; O. M. Jeppe, barber; W. F. Diebner, druggist; Herman Witt, jeweler; J. G. Sherer, furniture; P. Kroeger, general store; J. Elmer, tailor; H. A. Ficke & Son, agricultural implements; A. Timpe, photographer; N. Nissen, boots and shoes; Pal-

man Bros., clothing and gents' furnishing goods; J. Keller, blacksmith; A. J. Gault, editor *SPECTATOR*; J. E. Klahn, general store; L. L. & J. W. Hover, agricultural implements; Harry Fleagle, restaurant; F. W. Buxton, editor *Gazette*; A. M. Hall, Jr., cigar manufacturer; T. D. Gamble, druggist; Misses Conro, milliners; H. Werner, harness shop; F. C. Fiheld, hardware; Siegmund Bros., meat market; John Guenther & Sons, bankers; J. Stine, attorney; J. S. Stowers, groceries; J. F. Gunderman, saloon; J. Lohman, hardware, lumber and coal; J. S. Carpenter, City Hotel, Ferdinand Lahan, saloon; S. Akerly, barber; A. Grohman, hotel and saloon; Gus, Gerken, livery barn; J. W. Thompson, blacksmith; Frank Grouell, wagon shop; A. Fleig, blacksmith; Mr. Carson, cooper shop; Wm. Siegmund, hotel; Jesse Kimball, restaurant; Albert Grouell, repair shop; F. Beenk, brick and tile yard; D. S. Cook, A. W. Cook, T. D. Gamble and D. J. Chinn, physicians; L. H. Homrigausen, flouring mill.

### REMINISCENCES.

#### BUILDING OF THE "OLD BED" BRIDGE.

An amusing incident, but one



which might have been very disastrous, occurred in the early seventies; we have not been able to learn the exact year. It was in the spring of the year, however, and T. P. Farrington, Geo. Cochran, Patrick Cohan and Ludwig Derr were building the bridge—now torn down, but formerly known as Tom Farrington's bridge—across the Wapsie. While at work the regular spring rise of the Wapsie took place and the old settlers say it was a rise, indeed. The above named gentlemen were in a boat when it struck a snag and tipped them in. The following poem, published at that time, will more fully explain what followed better than any words of ours:

## THE BRIDGE BUILDERS

In Wheatland when the warm spring sun  
Had turned the snow to somber dun,  
And thick with silt the gutters run  
And geese began to hiss again.

A band of architects was formed,  
In spite of all the din and storm,  
Without the sound of pipe or horn,  
To bridge the Wapsipinicon.

The hardy band of four prepare  
To brave the tempest and to dare  
What no man would prove a scars,  
For self-defense is nature's law.

They start at once with courage brave,  
Across the prairie's muddy wave,  
Thinking, perhaps, how they could save  
Their dinner and their esquibagh.

No road across the trackless waste,  
No guide or buoy to mark the place,  
To show where'er the human race  
Had driven teams of horses o'er.

The water stood on every hand,  
With scarce a little speck of land;  
While o'er the crumbling beds of sand  
The Wapsie's waves majestic roar.

White raging, tearing through the trees,  
The thunderous roaring almost freeze  
The very blood; the strong men's knees  
But stand beneath them tremblingly.

But now above the din and noise  
Is heard old Tom's loud cheering voice:  
"I see the boat," he cries, "my boys,  
We soon will launch her merrily."

And now they reach her, off they cast  
Her moorings tied so strong and fast,  
And in at once they hurry fast,  
She almost proved their sepulcher,

Tom at the oars sat firm and bold,  
Pat at the stern the tiller holds;  
George at the bow was often told  
To watch the snags with Mr. Derr.

Fierce raged the waves, and fierce they lashed  
The little boat as if to smash  
Its ribs; and in the direful crash  
To launch them in eternity.

Derr grasps her sides with terror wild,  
Pat's thoughts were of his home and child;  
George, terror frozen, looked and smiled  
At Tom's child-like urbanity.

E're yet the raging stream was crossed,  
The boat on towering billows tossed,  
With all her lives was nearly lost,  
She struck a snag and tipped them in,

George grasped the snag with all his might,  
Pat caught him by the right leg tight;  
Derr, with the boat was out of sight,  
Tom was ashore for he could swim.

Now hear the cries that rend the air,  
O! Virgin help us was their prayer;  
Run Tom, save us, never spare  
Your legs, in you must rest our hope.

Through brush, through swamp and deep morass,  
Full forty rods Tom legged it fast,  
He found the wished for rope at last  
And back he went with dubious hope,

"Now look out boys and catch the rope,  
And grasp it tight; it's all the hope  
There is to take you out of soak,"  
Tom shouted as he tossed it,

Saint Patrick help us was the cry,  
The Virgin keep us or we die.  
To catch the rope they both did try,  
And luckily they caught it.

George, by the knot had caught it neat.  
And Pat above him 'bout two feet.  
The rope drawn taut, brought Patrick's seat  
Astride of George's neck and shoulders.

George underneath, with Pat astride,  
"Where has George gone?" now Thomas cried.  
"I have him here, quick" Pat replied;  
"Pull on the rope, I'll hould him."

And now on shore they're drawn at last,  
Pat wished he had a small pint flask  
For George was panting very fast,  
Had taken too much water.

No thought of self had Patrick then,



He simply wished it for his friend,  
He'd not refuse it "you bet," when  
They all get back to Wheatland.

And where is Derr who took the boat?  
And down the river went afloat  
And left the other men to soak?  
He seeks to drop his anchor.

About a mile adown the stream  
He floated safe, as it would seem,  
Caught at last in a tree top green,  
Like Abasom in its branches.

They're home at last, and Wheatland's streng  
Are all alive, right glad to greet  
The whole bridge party, washed and neat,  
But mighty dry they are indeed sirs.

And now Tom looks with wistful eye,  
Says he, "my boys I'm pretty dry,"  
Says George and Pat, too, "so am I,  
Let's have a crap of the crater."

At Gamble's store they hasten in  
(You know he keeps good Holland gin  
And you can get it with the "tin")  
You see he has a license.

Now as the liquor each one quaff,  
About their "duckling" joke and laugh,  
Pat says "'Tis better now by half  
Than too much Wapsie water."

I think just now, 'twixt you and I,  
That George and Pat will hardly try  
Another sail till years go by,  
At least on Wapsie water.

I think likewise I've wrote enough,  
My story's gettting long and tough,  
But then the Wapsie's rather rough,  
Couldn't make it shorter.

A. J. G.

In the early days of Wheatland while M. L. Rogers & Co., were doing business here they advertised extensively, paying the Wheatland paper \$80 per column per year and at one time did \$250,000 worth of business per year. J. E. Carter, hardware dealer, gave the paper \$80 per year and did well in business. Other firms were equally liberal in the use of printer's ink and Wheatland's business boomed.

The early settlers of Wheatland lived in a hunter's paradise. Ducks were plentiful, as was also all other kinds of wild fowl. So good was hunting in this neighborhood that sportsmen frequently came here from a distance. One day a stranger by the name of Budd came here and went hunting with E. Woods. They rowed their boat to Wright's island where Budd took his stand and Woods took the boat to go in search of a station. He had not proceeded far when Mr. Budd shot a duck which dropped in the water and Woods had to turn the boat around and pick it up. He was kept busy in this manner until Budd bagged 75 ducks. We do not know how many ducks Mr. Woods shot, but they were obliged to get a wagon to haul their game home.

An amusing incident is told by the old settlers concerning the first store building—the shanty erected by M. L. Rogers. They say it was no uncommon sight to see Mart standing and holding an umbrella over his wife during a shower, to keep the rain off of her while she was cooking dinner. Such was pioneer life in Wheatland.



During the period comprising the years 1884-5-6 and '7 politics were pretty warm in Wheatland. Effigies frequently appeared to greet the early riser. In fact, effigies of all kinds, tall and short, lean and fat, piles of beer kegs, bottles and dry goods boxes became so numerous on the lot where the bank and meat market now stand that that part of the town soon became known as effigy park. Those were stirring times in Wheatland, but of late years occurrences of this kind have been few and far between.

"All jokes were free and all were hail fellows well met. M. L. Rogers at one time sold a pair of boots to an old fisherman, Shute, by name, and for pay was to "take the fish as they run." The pay in fish had not come in as M. L. expected, and he asked Shute if it was not about time for them. "Yes," said Shute, "they are running nicely, go and take them." But jokes are jokes; M. L. saw it and took it in good humor.

In the early days the land where the German church now stands was sown to wheat and raised as high as forty bushels to the acre.

When Wheatland was young the Irish and the German citizens fought for the supremacy. Clubs, boards and the like were brought into play and many sore heads resulted. The German people came off gloriously victorious.

#### THE WAPSIE RANGERS.

Previous to the platting of the town of Wheatland, there existed a band of men known as the Wapsie Rangers. At this time the county had within its borders an organized gang of horse thieves and in order to protect the settlers from further depredations, and also to break up the gang and punish the men engaged in this unlawful vocation, the Wapsie Rangers society was organized. While these events do not, properly speaking, belong to the history of Wheatland, still they will make interesting reading at this time and a perusal of these lines by the old settler will call to his mind many incidents of the long ago.

There lived at this time just across the Wapsie river and on the farm now occupied by Mr. Griffith, a man by the name of Bennett Warren. While he was suspected of aiding and abetting criminals, it is said that sufficient



evidence could not be obtained to convict him. But, nevertheless, a gang of vigilants went to his house on the 24th of June, 1857, and took him to a small grove near by and hung him, after the vigilants' jury had found him guilty of harboring horse thieves, keeping and secreting stolen horses and habitually passing counterfeit money.

In July of the same year Alonzo Gleason and Edward Soper were hung in a grove near Lowden for horse stealing.

While there were others hung in this county, these are the only cases that we know of that took place in the territory tributary to Wheatland. The headquarters of the Wapsie Rangers was near Big Rock.

The following poem was written and published about this time: Times have come to a curious pass; The world's progressing very fast Parties forming People storming Raging like a wild tornado. Horse thieves running Regulators coming, In furious haste and fierce bravado. A band of horse thieves roam at large, And law abiders on them charge; Weapons clanging, Horse thieves hanging.

On some tree just close at hand,  
Maintaining laws;  
They never pause,  
This loyal law abiding band.

'Tis true the statute law don't say  
That men may hang in such a way,  
But that's a blunder,  
Sure as thunder.

Judge Lynch defines the law all right:

To hang when caught,  
Each thievish sot,  
Whether in daylight or at night.

Another law I think they'll try  
To make all right ('twixt you and I),  
That is when man  
Tries all he can

To cheat you in a horse trade;  
'Tis false pretence,  
The law says, hence  
That law is nixforstayed.

I know its wrong to steal a horse,  
To cheat in trade, is right of course;  
Because the man  
Sees all you can,

And you're not bound to tell him all;  
If your horse he takes,  
And lose; you make  
It's sharp practice and that is all.

It's sharp practice or over reach  
By glibber tongue or ready speech,  
It's right I guess,  
But such a mess

It seems to make when put together;  
In trade to shave  
Then hang the knave  
Who steals a horse and takes the tether.



## HISTORY OF WHEATLAND.

### CONCLUSION.

Thus ends a brief history of the thriving little town of Wheatland. Although the town has several time suffered by fire, it has been rebuilt time and again until now it is one of the prettiest towns of its size of any in Iowa. The old wooden buildings of former days have been replaced with new and commodious bricks; the streets are bordered with lofty and beautiful shade trees; the residence lawns are spacious and well kept; our educational and religious fa-

cilities are good; our hotels best to be had; our merchants are energetic and in the face of this why should not the town of Wheatland prosper?

Surrounded as it is by fertile rolling land to the north and west and by broad expansive prairie to the south, it enjoys one of the best locations of any county. A veritable "oasis in the woods." Long live the town of Wheatland and may its inhabitants always prosper.

THE















